**Chapter 16**

EXPLORE: Variety Shows

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/vshtml/vsfmlst.html>

The American musical theatre developed over the 20th century into an extremely popular art form. You can see videos of some of its precursors at the Library of Congress site “American Memory: American Variety Stage”. Here you can choose to view animal acts, Burlesque, comic sketches, early dance forms, physical acts such as trick bicycle riding, and dramatic tableaus.

SHARE

Try to put together your own set of songs that describes your typical day or an important event in your life. Choose songs that you know well and that describe or are in-tune with your changing feelings throughout the day or event. Put them in an order that illustrates the progress of the day or event. Share your “musical” on your course discussion board or the textbook Dashboard.

ATTEND AND REPORT

Search your local theater listings or on campus theatre and music department production calendars for a musical in your area. Attend the show and share your reactions using the Hearing Music Live report form. Research *Billboard,* a weekly magazine dedicated to American popular culture and the music industry, for songs that appeared on the “Billboard Top 100” that originated in a musical. Report your findings to your class discussion board or the textbook Dashboard.

EXPLORE

Over the decades many songs from musicals have become hit tunes on the pop charts. Here is a very brief list of examples: “Night and Day”, “I’ll Never Fall in Love Again”, Almost Like Being in Love”, “Aquarius”, “Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas”, “We Need A Little Christmas”, “I Could Have Danced All Night”, “The Impossible Dream”, “Send in the Clowns”, “One Night in Bangkok”. These songs, among many others, have become iconic in American popular culture. And hit tunes have been used to create a musical. The songs of the popular disco era group ABBA served as the basis for the recent hit musical *Mama mia!*